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The Remarkable Reality of Isaiah's Messiah

The **SEED**
of **WOMAN**

Q&A:

Why Do
You Believe
"Obedience" is
Necessary to
Salvation?

2022

Bound Volumes

THE REMARKABLE REALITY OF ISAIAH'S MESSIAH

Eric Lyons, M.Min.

WRITING in the latter part of the first century A.D., the apostle John quoted Isaiah 53:1 and 6:10 and testified that the Messianic prophet was referring to Jesus of Nazareth (John 12:36-41).¹ In the early-to-mid 60s, the apostle Peter quoted Isaiah 53:5,9 and applied the suffering Servant passage to Jesus (1 Peter 2:24,22). The apostle Matthew testified that Jesus fulfilled

- Isaiah 7:14 by being born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:18-2:1),
- Isaiah 9:1-2 by dwelling in Capernaum, “which is...in the regions of Zebulun and Naphthali” (Matthew 4:12-17),
- Isaiah 53:4 by healing many who were sick and demon-possessed (Matthew 8:16-17),
- Isaiah 53:12 by being “numbered with the transgressors” (Matthew 27:38; cf. Mark 15:27-28),
- Isaiah 53:9 when “they made His grave...with the rich at His death” (Matthew 27:57-60).

Luke reminded his first-century readers that Jesus fulfilled Isaiah 9:7 by sitting on “the throne of His father David...forever” (Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:30-36; cf. 2 Samuel 7:12-13). Mark began his gospel account quoting Isaiah 40:3 and identified not only the forerunner of the Messiah as John the baptizer, but the Messiah Himself as Jesus (Mark 1:1-

15; cf. Luke 3:4-6). Paul, the Old Testament scholar,² former persecutor of the Church, and later devoted Christian apologist, quoted Isaiah 11:10 and attested that this prophecy was one of “the promises made to the fathers” which was fulfilled in Jesus (Romans 15:8,12).

In the early-to-mid 30s (very shortly after the establishment of the Church), an Ethiopian proselyte was returning from Jerusalem reading from the scroll of Isaiah, specifically 53:7-8 (Acts 8:28-33). The Ethiopian asked the evangelist Philip, “[O]f whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?” (Acts 8:34). “Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached **Jesus** to him” (8:35). Who was the suffering Servant of Isaiah 53? Once again, the answer is Jesus. The consistent, recurring testimony of the often threatened, persecuted, and



martyred New Testament apostles and prophets is unmistakable: the Messiah of Whom Isaiah frequently prophesied was Jesus of Nazareth.

Considering the plethora of testimony throughout the New Testament that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies of Isaiah, it should come as no surprise that early on in Jesus' ministry, He read publicly from Isaiah and made Himself known as the Messiah. While in the synagogue in His hometown of Nazareth, He was given the scroll of Isaiah “and found the place where it was written: ‘The Spirit of the Lord was upon **me**, because He has anointed **me** to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent **me** to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor’” (Luke 4:17-19, ESV). Jesus not only read from Isaiah's prophecy of the coming Messiah (Isaiah 61:1-2), He also made an astonishing announcement: “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:21). Jesus plainly and succinctly announced that He was Isaiah's marvelous Messiah.

Jesus and the New Testament apostles and prophets quoted from the prophet Isaiah dozens of times—primarily to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the long-awaited Messiah. Jesus perfectly fulfilled every prophecy, sufficiently proving³ His identification as humankind's Divine, Sovereign Savior.

REASONABLE EVIDENCE

ANY rational person knows that it is beyond the ability of humanity to foretell the future. People can have knowledge of many things about the past and the present, but no one knows the future. We may speculate about what the stock market is going to do in the coming days and years, or we

can make an educated guess at who is going to win a particular game, etc., but no mere human being actually knows the future.⁴

I live in a tri-county area of Alabama with a population of nearly 400,000 people. For many years, I have passed a “fortune-teller’s” place of business on my way to and from work. Are there long lines at this establishment? Are there crowds of people anxiously waiting outside for someone to tell them who is going to win the lottery, the Super Bowl, or the next election? Nothing could be farther from the truth. “Business” is, for all intents and purposes, non-existent. It seems evident that the vast majority of people have come to the reasonable conclusion that only an all-knowing, supernatural Being knows the future.⁵

The Bible acknowledges such a logical conclusion about the knowledge of future events. Jeremiah wrote: “When the word of the prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be known as one whom the Lord has truly sent” (Jeremiah 28:9). On the other hand, “Who is he who speaks and it comes to pass, when the Lord has not commanded it?” (Lamentations 3:37). That is, those who prophesy things that do not come to pass, “the Lord has not sent;” “they prophesy falsely” (Jeremiah 28:15; 29:8-9; cf. Deuteronomy 18:21-22). Indeed, no one accurately foretells the future unless the omniscient God of heaven informs him of it.⁶

If only God knows the future, then a logical way to prove that (1) He exists, (2) the Bible writers were correct about the Messiah, and (3) Jesus was and is the long-awaited Sovereign Messiah is (a) if real prophecies about the Messiah were made, and (b) Jesus fulfilled those prophecies.

HOW DO WE KNOW THE PROPHECIES WERE REAL?

HOW do we know that the supposed prophecies of Isaiah were not simply made up in the first century? How can we know that Jesus and the New Testament writers did not fake the “future-telling” of Isaiah? Could it be that Jesus, Paul, and all other first-century apostles and prophets were mere con men who claimed Jesus fulfilled prophecies (that were never actually made)?

First, if Jesus and the Bible writers were liars, then they repeatedly pronounced their own destruction, for they claimed that lying is sinful and that all impenitent liars will suffer eternal punishment.⁷

Second, the early audiences of Jesus and the New Testament prophets were devout Jews,⁸ who could have easily fact-checked their use of Isaiah and whether Jesus fit the description of the Messiah.

Third, non-biblical sources refer to and quote Isaiah. The first-century Jewish historian Josephus, for example, refers to “the book which Isaiah left behind him of his prophecies.”⁹ Josephus then quotes from and summarizes Isaiah 44:28-45:3 and notes how “this was foretold by Isaiah one hundred and forty years before the temple was demolished” (in 586 B.C.). Indeed, Josephus believed that Isaiah lived, prophesied, and wrote his book

long before the New Testament was penned.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we have tangible, verifiable archaeological evidence that the book of Isaiah was in existence in its totality long before Jesus or any New Testament writer ever could have invented the many Messianic prophecies in Isaiah. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls (discovered in the 1940s and 50s) were 19 different manuscripts of Isaiah, as well as five commentaries¹⁰ on the book.¹¹ Most scholars acknowledge that these manuscripts were made several decades or even a century or two **before** Jesus began His ministry around A.D. 27, and well before the first New Testament books were penned around the middle of the first-century A.D. One manuscript of Isaiah, known as the “Great Isaiah Scroll” (1QIsa^a), contains the book of Isaiah in its entirety. What’s more, the scroll is conservatively dated to **at least** 100 B.C. (and very possibly as much as 200 B.C.).¹²

Though skeptics may reject that the Messianic prophet Isaiah actually prophesied in the 8th century B.C. (in the days of Jewish kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, as Isaiah 1:1 claims), they cannot justifiably dismiss the hard evidence among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Verifiable proof exists that the New Testament writers did not invent the Isaiah prophecies and mislead simpletons about



Dead Sea Scroll - Book of Isaiah

Jesus' alleged Messiahship. On the contrary, it was largely an in-depth study of the Old Testament scriptures that led many thousands of first-century Jews (as well as countless Gentiles) to acknowledge Jesus' fulfillment of the many Messianic prophecies.¹³

WHY SHOULD WE BELIEVE THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS?

SOME might argue that, though Isaiah's prophecies were already in existence well before the time of Jesus, we cannot really know if Jesus fulfilled those prophecies. The evidence, however, firmly stands on the side of the New Testament writers, indicating that Jesus actually did fulfill the Old Testament Messianic prophecies.

First, Jesus of Nazareth was a real historical Person, affirmed even by various first and second century hostile, secular sources.¹⁴

Second, the case built for the authenticity of Jesus' fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies stands upon not what **one** writer testified but **multiple independent** writers. Even leading unbelievers admit that the events in Jesus' life were recorded by more than one writer.¹⁵ If scholars of ancient history generally render facts unimpeachable when two or three sources are in agreement, then the multiple attestations of Jesus' fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, James, Paul, Peter, and Jude) is extremely impressive.

Third, as stated earlier, if the Bible writers were sinful deceivers, they repeatedly pronounced their own destruction, claiming that impenitent liars would suffer eternal damnation.

Fourth, as Wayne Jackson observed, "If the New Testament writers did not believe in eternal accountability, and so callously fabricated the documents that affirmed Jesus' divine nature, why would

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they have subjected themselves to the persecution that accompanied Christianity—since this life would be all they believed they would ever enjoy? It makes no sense at all. This is a problem that no skeptic can explain. The New Testament documents are reliable!"¹⁶

Fifth, the New Testament apostles and prophets consistently challenged first-century Jews to compare the recent life of Jesus of Nazareth with the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. The apostle Paul's "custom" was to enter Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath

and reason with the Jews from the Old Testament about the Christ, "explaining" and "demonstrating" Jesus' fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies.¹⁷

Sixth, Paul's teachings could withstand thorough, analytical scrutiny. The Bereans, for example, "searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed" (Acts 17:11-12).

This leads us to our last point: In the immediate 30 years following the life of Jesus, tens of thousands of Jews (Acts 21:20), including "a great many" Jewish priests (Acts 6:7), became followers of Jesus, the Christ. What did these Jews believe about the Old Testament? That it is the inspired Word of God, just as it claims thousands of times. And what did these Old Testament believers realize about Jesus of Nazareth, Who had only recently lived among them? That, indeed, He was the long-awaited Messiah.

CONCLUSION

DID Isaiah not predict (among other things) that a virgin-born, Galilee-dwelling, morally perfect, miracle-work-

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ing Divine Ruler would be afflicted, oppressed, wounded, struck, bruised, pierced, and spat upon? Did Isaiah not predict that the Messianic suffering Servant would be numbered with the transgressors and yet also be buried with the rich? He did.

Who came along hundreds of years later and fulfilled all of these prophecies (and more) with exact precision? Who proved His Messiahship with such fulfillment? Who did the New Testament apostles and prophets repeatedly testify (at their own peril) with great specificity the One and Only fulfiller of these prophecies? Jesus of Nazareth.

Though many more prophecies are found throughout the Old Testament, Isaiah's accurate predictions alone are more than capable of sufficiently spotlighting the Messiah. Who came along hundreds of years later as the suffering Servant and ruling Redeemer. Who else but Jesus could the prophesied Messiah have been?

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Isaiah also foretold of those who rejected Jesus' teachings.
- ² Philippians 3:4-6.
- ³ Along with the supernatural miracles He worked (John 20:30-31).
- ⁴ Perhaps there is no better example in recent times of humankind's inability to know the future than Donald Trump's rise in politics. Do you recall how, early on in the primary process, virtually no one thought the life-long businessman, Donald Trump, would ever be elected President of the United States? Even the most seemingly politically informed Americans—both Democrats and Republicans—did not give Donald Trump a chance (at least early on in the process). Yet, the virtually incomprehensible happened in 2017: Mr. Trump won the Republican nomination and then went on to become the 45th President of the United States.
- ⁵ Granted, atheists do not believe in God, but even they know that if, theoretically, such an omniscient Being does exist, then He would have the ability to know the future.
- ⁶ Diviners may occasionally and vaguely

"predict" something that comes to pass, but such guesswork or weatherman-like predictions are far from the supernatural foreknowledge of God.

⁷ John 8:44; Acts 5:3; Ephesians 4:25; Revelation 21:8.

⁸ E.g., Jews traveled from all over—from many distant lands—to Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection and heard various Old Testament scriptures applied to Jesus and the establishment of His Kingdom (Acts 2:5-40). Devout Jews who were in synagogues on Sabbath days were challenged to compare the recent life of Christ with the prophecies He was said to have fulfilled (Acts 13:14ff; 17:1-4,10-12).

⁹ *Antiquities of the Jews*, 11:1:2.

¹⁰ These commentaries are known as *pesharim* [John D. Barry (2013), "The Great Isaiah Scroll and the Original Bible: An Interview with Dr. Peter Flint," Associates for Biblical Research, April 17, biblearchaeology.org/research/topics/ancient-manuscripts/2812-the-great-isaiah-scroll-and-the-original-bible-an-interview-with-dr-peter-flint].

¹¹ Obviously, if a commentary exists on a book, then the book on which that commentary is

based has already been in existence.

¹² Even the pro-atheistic, pro-evolution magazine *New Scientist* admitted that the Great Isaiah Scroll "was completed around the 2nd century BC" [Krista Charles (2021), "AI Analysis Shows Two Scribes Wrote One of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *New Scientist*, April 21, <https://www.newscientist.com/article/2275298-ai-analysis-shows-two-scribes-wrote-one-of-the-dead-sea-scrolls/>].

¹³ Cf. Luke 24:27; Acts 9:20; 17:10-12; 21:20; 28:23.

¹⁴ See Kyle Butt (2000), "The Historical Christ—Fact or Fiction?" *Reason & Revelation*, 20[1]:1-6, January, <https://apologeticspress.org/the-historical-christ-fact-or-fiction-187/>.

¹⁵ Cf. Dan Barker (1992), *Losing Faith in Faith* (Madison, WI: Freedom From Religion Foundation), p. 179; cf. also Tad S. Clements (1990), *Science vs. Religion* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus), p. 193.

¹⁶ "Are the Gospel Writers Credible?" (2022), *Christian Courier*, <https://christiancourier.com/articles/are-the-gospel-writers-credible>.

¹⁷ Acts 17:1-4; cf. 9:20; 13:5; 13:14-41; 18:4.



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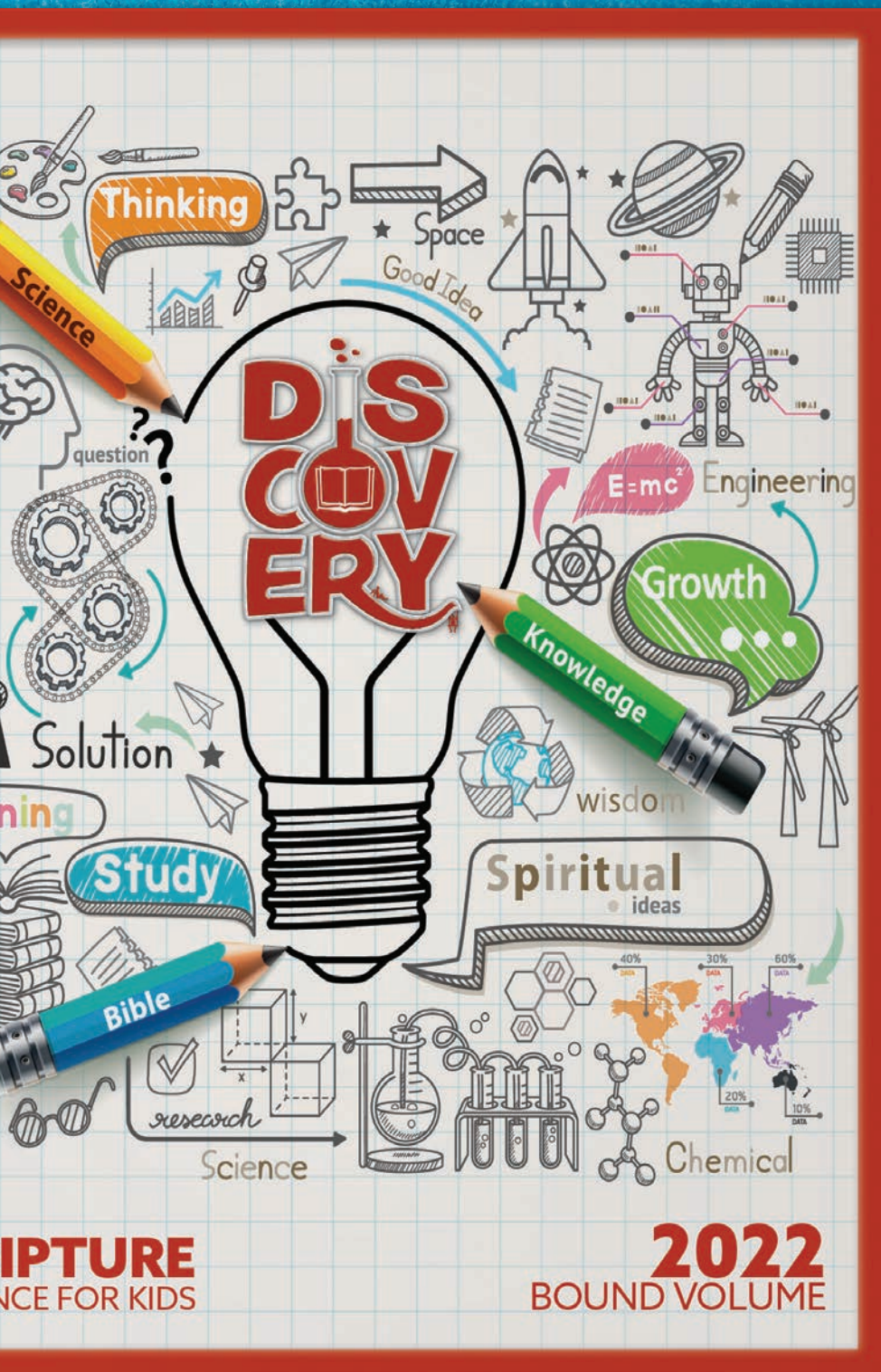
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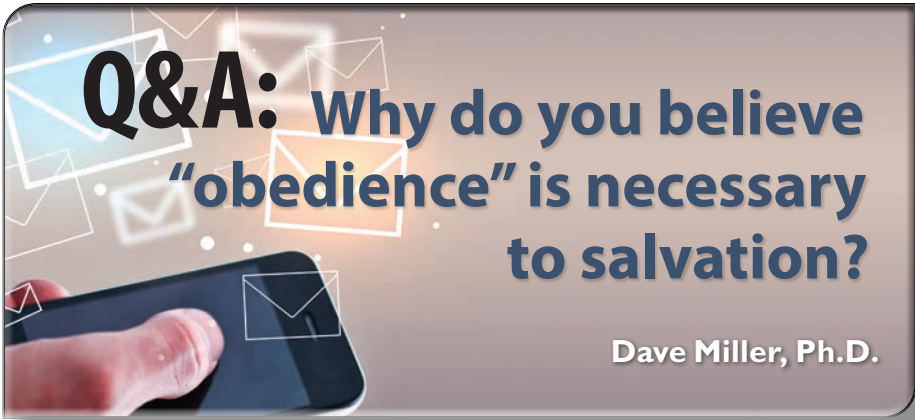
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Q&A: Why do you believe “obedience” is necessary to salvation?

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

Q: “I came upon your website due to the referral of a Christian brother who provided me a link to your article on John Quincy Adams’ views on Islam. Loved the article and will share it with others. When checking into your beliefs I note the following on your site under “What We Believe:” ‘Salvation is by means of obedience to the Gospel system, involving faith in God and Christ, repentance from sin, confession of faith, and immersion in water for remission of past sins, coupled with a life of growing consecration and dedication.’ In all honesty, when I read Scripture I do not get that ‘salvation’ has anything whatsoever to do with a ‘Gospel system’ or ‘obedience’ thereof. Surely you cannot mean that our deeds and works can make us righteous or clean in the eyes of a perfect and entirely Holy God? Moreover, we cannot follow any kind of a ‘system’ or formula, regardless of how good it may be. Only Christ and His completed sacrifice, once for all, can save those who believe in Him, His Word, and His Resurrection. I think the most simple and direct quotes on how Salvation is ‘achieved’ (really awarded is the better and most accurate word) is from Romans 10:17 and Acts 10:34-46. In light of these verses, why would you take the stance you do on your website? Put another way, why do you believe salvation is had

by any other way than as noted in the cited sections of Romans, Acts, and any number of other examples throughout Scripture of persons being saved?”

P.L., Palm Desert, CA

A: It is true that the New Testament does not use the phrase “Gospel system,” but the concept is certainly biblical, even as we speak of the “Christian system” or the “Christian religion.” In Romans, the Gospel/grace system is contrasted with a strictly legal/law system. The point of Romans is that the Jews could not depend on their ethnic heritage (their genetic connection to Abraham with its covenant symbol of circumcision) or the Law of Moses to save them—because genetic connection is fleshly and avails nothing, and they did not diligently keep the Law of Moses given to them. No one can be saved by **law alone**, since everyone has violated God’s law and therefore stands condemned by the law. We needed a different approach to the sin problem, specifically, the Gospel (the good news that God inhabited human flesh in the person of His Son to atone for sin, i.e., our violations of God’s law). To be sure, the Gospel has law that we must obey, just like the Law of Moses; but it also has the means of **ultimate** atonement which the Law of Moses did not technically have (cf.

Hebrews 10:4). Yes, the orchestration of that means of forgiveness is **wholly God’s doing** which we do not deserve. There is absolutely nothing we can do **to atone** for our own sin. **This is the grace of the Bible** (e.g., Titus 2:11).

However, it by no means follows that there is **nothing** that God requires of us **before** He will freely cleanse us. You, yourself, agree that a person must believe. So, you agree, in principle, with the idea that simply because there is action that a person must **do** to be saved, that action does not nullify the fact that salvation is a **free gift** and the individual does not **earn or deserve** salvation. The individual must believe—an act of human effort, called a “work” in John 6:29, i.e., a work that God requires humans to perform. Indeed, believing is also a command to be obeyed (John 8:24; 14:1; Acts 16:31; 1 John 3:23). But what does it mean to believe? It is not merely a mental act of accepting Jesus (as much of Christendom repeatedly affirms), since Paul defines the “faith” of Romans as an “obedient faith” (*hupakoain pisteos*) in 1:5 and 16:26. Romans uses forms of the word “obey” and “obedience” 10 times, and forthrightly declares that a person will be judged “according to his deeds” (2:6), and that “eternal life” will be given to “those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality,” while those who “do not **obey** the truth” will receive “indignation and wrath” (2:7-8). Romans 6:16 indicates that obedience precedes righteousness. So, yes, humans must perform deeds to be pleasing to God. The point that the Bible makes regarding those deeds is that they do not **earn** salvation for the individual; they do not wash away sin—since only the blood of Christ can do that. Christ’s blood is the cleansing agent. But **when** does God apply Christ’s blood to our

sin-stained spirits? Answer: when a person “**obey**[s] the Gospel” (2 Thessalonians 1:8). How does one obey the Gospel? Acts is the “book of conversions” that gives example after example of instances wherein people obeyed the Gospel to become Christians. The chart below records only the explicitly stated actions that occurred in 10 cases of conversion to Christ in the book of Acts—actions that **preceded** salvation.

Romans was not actually intended to detail the **conditions** of salvation; rather, Romans explains the **grounds/basis** of salvation: the blood of Christ. Nevertheless, in passing, Romans happens to mention every single one of the prerequisite **conditions** of salvation with which humans must comply before God will grant forgiveness

as a free, undeserved gift. Romans 10:17, as you note, indicates that a person must first hear the Gospel/Word of God, which is designed to create faith within. But Romans 10:9-10 makes clear that faith is not the only prerequisite to forgiveness. Oral confession with the mouth is also enjoined. Romans 2:4 indicates that repentance is necessary before God will forgive. And Romans 6:1-4 indicates that water immersion precedes salvation, since it is the contact point for the blood of Christ which was shed in His death. We must be baptized “into His death” to contact that blood. That is the point at which sin is washed away by the blood of Christ. No wonder, then, that Ananias told Saul/Paul to “arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling

on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). When does a person “call on the Lord”? When the believing, repenting, confessing person submits to water immersion (Acts 22:16). That explains why Peter declared that baptism “now saves us” (1 Peter 3:21)—in the sense that Christ’s blood saves us at the point of our baptism; and that is why that same Peter impressed upon those present in Acts 10 that the reception of Holy Spirit baptism directly from God upon the Gentiles was proof positive that Gentiles have the right to become Christians just as much as do the Jews. Once their eligibility for conversion was demonstrated by that miraculous act direct from God, Peter then pressed for their obedience in the words, “Can anyone forbid water, that these should not

Cases of Conversion in the Book of Acts

Acts	Believe	Repent	Confess	Baptized	Saved
2:37-38 Jews	pricked	repented		baptized	remission
8:12-13 Samaritans	believed			baptized	
8:36-39 Eunuch	believed		confessed	baptized	rejoiced
9:6,9,18; 22:16 Saul	trembled	sorrow	confessed	baptized	sins washed
10:43,48; 11:14,17-18 Cornelius	believed	repented		baptized	saved/life
16:14-15 Lydia	heart opened			baptized	faithful
16:31-34 Jailer	believed	washed stripes		baptized	rejoiced
17:12 Bereans	believed				
18:8 Corinthians	believed			baptized	saints 1 Cor. 1:2
19:2-5,18 Ephesians	believed	confessed evil deeds		baptized	in Christ Eph. 1:3

be baptized...?” (Acts 10:47). Why even bring up **water** at that moment if water immersion was not prerequisite to their forgiveness?

So faith, repentance, confession, and baptism are all indicated to **precede** remission of sin. We must obey these acts—not to atone for our sin, for only Jesus can do that—but to comply with God’s stated **conditions**—conditions that He authored (not us) and enjoined upon all who wish to be saved. That is why the Hebrews writer stated forthrightly that Jesus is “the author of eternal salvation **to all who obey Him**” (Hebrews 5:9). It is interesting that you quote Acts 10:34-35 which indicates that before a person is acceptable to Christ, that person must “fear Him and **work righteousness**” (vs. 35). “He who **practices righteousness** is righteous, just as He is righteous” (1 John 3:7). In other words, belief, repentance, oral confession, and water immersion are righteous actions that humans must perform in order to receive the free gift of salvation available only in Christ, and be counted by Him as righteous.

Jesus said, “blessed are those who hear the word of God and **obey** it!” (Luke 11:28, NIV). He also said, “If anyone loves me, he will **obey** my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him” (John 14:23, NIV). Indeed, the day is coming when “the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on **those who do not obey the gospel** of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8).

Denominationalism has manifested a persistent refusal to distinguish between the **grounds** of salvation and the **conditions** of salvation—the compatible, scriptural distinction between Christ’s atonement and man’s obedience.



A **CURIOUS** expression occurs in Genesis 3:15 that might easily escape the notice of the inattentive reader.¹ The verse reads: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” This prediction is uttered in context by God in His remarks to the serpent.² What’s peculiar about the prediction is the fact that the woman, presumably Eve, is spoken of as producing or possessing “seed.” The Hebrew term that underlies the English word in this verse is the normal word for seed that is sown in order to produce crops (e.g., Genesis 1:11-12). In this sense, it can also refer to human seed, i.e., semen (Leviticus 15:16,32; 22:4).³ By metonymy, the same term can refer to “posterity,” “progeny,” “descendants,” or “offspring.”⁴

The usual nomenclature that has characterized much of human history has assigned the notion of “seed” to the man—not the woman. Prior to the discovery of modern genetics—a science that largely commenced with Gregor Mendel, a 19th century Augustinian monk, now recognized as the Father of Modern Genetics—popular understanding perceived the male as the primary, if not exclusive, contributor to the reproduction process. The woman was certainly an important variable in the production of children—so much so that she was uniformly

blamed by male monarchs for their own failure to produce male heirs. However, her role was generally viewed in much the same way that an incubator is integral to the hatching of eggs. The prevailing perspective did not conceptualize the equal contributory role of the female to the production of progeny.

This circumstance was well-stated by Reginald Punnett roughly a century ago. A British geneticist, who co-founded the *Journal of Genetics* in 1910, Punnett is probably best remembered today as the creator of the Punnett square—still used by biologists to predict the probability of genotypes of offspring. He authored the book *Mendelism*—considered by many to be the first textbook on genetics. Punnett served as a professor of biology and, later, was appointed the first Arthur Balfour Professor of Genetics at Cambridge. Here is Punnett’s summary assessment of the popular misconception that prevailed prior to the 18th century:

Few if any of the more primitive peoples seem to have attempted to define the part played by either parent in the formation of the offspring, or to have assigned peculiar powers of transmission to them, even in the vaguest way. For ages man must have been more or less consciously improving his domesticated races of animals and plants, yet it is not until the time of Aristotle that we have clear evidence of any hypothesis

to account for these phenomena of heredity. The production of offspring by man was then held to be similar to the production of a crop from seed. **The seed came from the man, the woman provided the soil.** This remained the generally accepted view for many centuries, and **it was not until the recognition of woman as more than a passive agent** that the physical basis of heredity became established. That recognition was effected by the microscope, for only with its advent was actual observation of the minute sexual cells made possible. After more than a hundred years of conflict lasting until the end of the eighteenth century, scientific men settled down to the view that **each of the sexes** makes a definite material contribution to the offspring produced by their joint efforts.⁵

Unlike the prevailing misconception that characterized most of human history, the Bible demonstrated its divine origin by using terminology that harmonizes with now better understood scientific truth. While also referring often to the seed of man, on one other occasion, God refers to the “seed” of woman when the Angel of the Lord reassured Hagar: “I will surely multiply your offspring” (Genesis 16:10; cf. 24:60). The term “offspring” is the usual word for “seed.” Translators tend to render into English their own conclusions, rather than allowing the biblical text to retain its original terminology.

Indeed, someone might suggest that “seed” in Genesis 3:15 is merely used colloquially to refer to “posterity,” “offspring,” or “descendants,” with no intention of suggesting that the female possesses “seed” comparable to the male. However, observe that language would not use the term to refer to a woman’s offspring unless she also possesses literal “seed” from which that offspring could descend. The colloquial or met-

onymical meaning rises out of and is dependent upon the underlying reality of the **literal meaning** of “seed.” Moses used the same term repeatedly throughout the rest of Genesis to refer to the “seed” of the patriarchs.⁶ Notice: “offspring” or “descendants”—whether from male or female—must come from literal, actual “seed,” i.e., genetic material that combines to create another human being.

This remarkable Messianic prophecy, uttered at the beginning of human history and recorded by Moses 3,500 years ago, contains an uncanny allusion to an intricate feature of the human anatomy. Such sophisticated awareness is inexplicable on any other grounds than that the author of the book of Genesis was guided by a higher, supernatural Power Who was responsible for the creation of the human body. That same Creator has provided the world with an inerrant record of His intricate, incredible dealings in the history of mankind.

ENDNOTES

¹ Dave Miller (2021), *Hidden Meanings Buried in the Bible* (Montgomery, AL:

King Solomon Publications).

² For discussion of the Messianic nature of this prophecy, see Walter Kaiser (1980), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason Archer Jr., and Bruce Waltke (Chicago, IL: Moody), 1:253; Jack Lewis (1991), “The Woman’s Seed (Gen. 3:15),” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 34[3]:299-319.

³ Josiah Gibbs (1832), *A Manual Hebrew and English Lexicon* (New Haven, CT: Hezekiah Howe), p. 62; William Osburn (1845), *A New Hebrew-English Lexicon* (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons), p. 77. Cf. Numbers 5:28—“she shall be made pregnant with seed”—F. Brown, S. Driver, and C. Briggs (1907), *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson), p. 282.

⁴ L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, M.E.J. Richardson, J.J. Stamm (2000), F. Brown, S. Driver, and C. Briggs (1907), *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson), p. 282 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, electronic ed.), 5:283; Brown, et al., p. 282. See also Samuel Lee (1840), *A Lexicon, Hebrew, Chaldee, and English* (London: Duncan & Malcolm), p. 178; Selig Newman (1834), *A Hebrew and English Lexicon* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown & Green), p. 152.

⁵ R.C. Punnett (1913), *Mendelism* (New York: MacMillan), pp. 1-2, emp. added.

⁶ 12:7; 13:15-16; 15:13,18; 21:13; 22:17-18; 24:7; 26:3-4,24; 28:13-14; 32:12.

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NOTE FROM

The Editor



2022 Bound Volumes

The 2022 bound volumes of our two monthly magazines are now complete and ready for shipment from our offices. These bound volumes enable the articles contained therein to remain relevant far beyond the time period during which they were authored. The 2022 bound volume of *Reason & Revelation* contains timely articles on such topics as: The Integrity of the Biblical Text; More Unfossilized Evidence of “Dinosaurs” Living in the Recent Past; More Evidence that the “Junk” DNA Argument Is Junk; Are Tuskless Elephants Evidence of Rapid Darwinian Evolution?; Who Killed King Saul?; Why So Long for the New Testament to Be Written?; Young People Leave Faith Because They Believe Christianity Is Anti-Science; Abortion and the Bible; Micah and Bethlehem; “Unknown Tongue”?; Exploring Virus Mutations and Evolution Using SARS-CoV-2; Monkey Pox: Homosexuality Is Bad for You and God Called It Again; A Biblical Response to Cancel Culture; Jesus’ Furrowed Back; and more.

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